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(54) **SPIN TORQUE OSCILLATOR FOR  
MICROWAVE ASSISTED MAGNETIC  
RECORDING WITH INCREASED DAMPING**

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(2013.01)

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See application file for complete search history.

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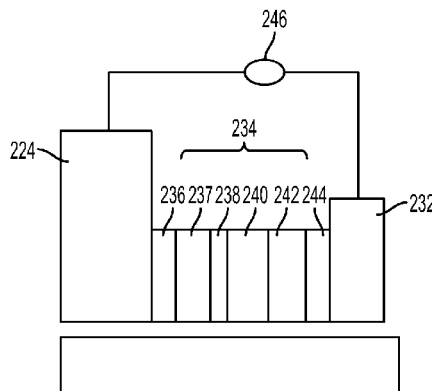
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A microwave assisted magnetic recording (MAMR) write head includes a write pole tip, a trailing shield, and a spin torque oscillator between the write pole tip and the trailing shield. The spin torque oscillator may have a field generating layer and a damping layer which is exchanged coupled to the field generating layer.

**26 Claims, 2 Drawing Sheets**



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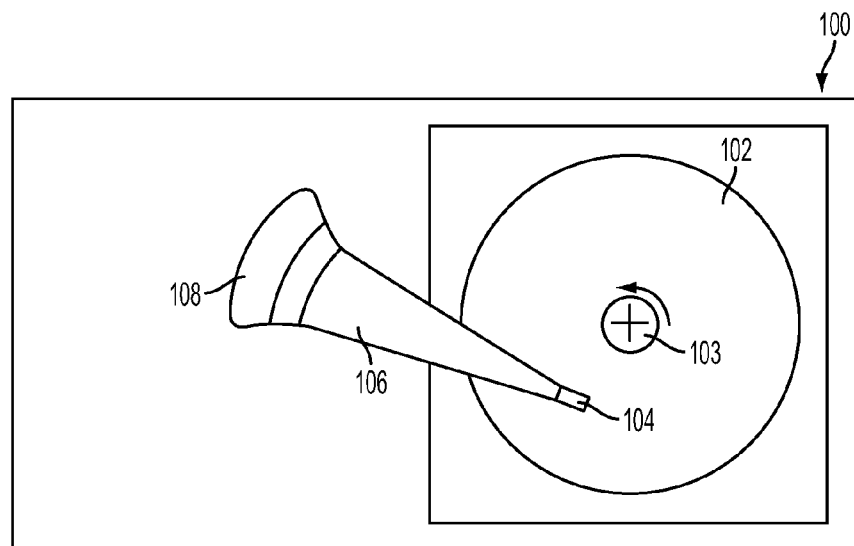


FIG. 1

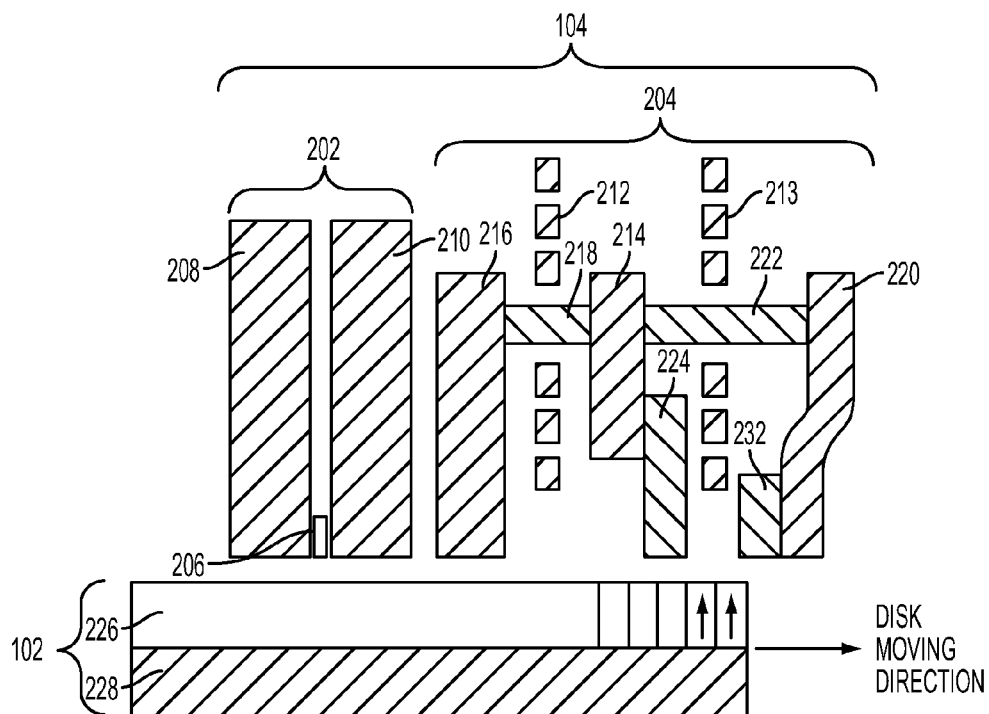


FIG. 2A

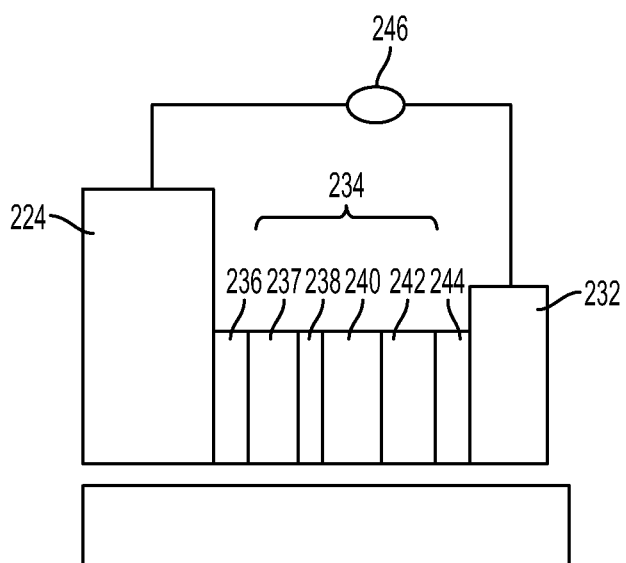


FIG. 2B

# SPIN TORQUE OSCILLATOR FOR MICROWAVE ASSISTED MAGNETIC RECORDING WITH INCREASED DAMPING

## FIELD

The present disclosure relates generally to perpendicular magnetic recording for hard disk drives, and more particularly, to perpendicular magnetic recording with a spin torque oscillator for microwave assisted magnetic recording with increased damping.

## BACKGROUND

For years, the hard disk drive industry has focused on longitudinal magnetic recording to record data on disks. In longitudinal recording, the direction of the magnetic charge for each data bit is aligned horizontally to the disk that spins inside the hard drive. More recently, perpendicular magnetic recording (PMR) has become the favored technology. In PMR, the direction of magnetic charge for each data bit is aligned vertically to the spinning disk, providing the ability to substantially increase aerial density by providing more data on a disk than is possible with conventional longitudinal recording.

New technologies are being developed to further increase aerial density by reducing the size of the magnetic grains that comprise the data bits in the recording layer on the surface of the disk. This reduction in the size of magnetic grains requires a corresponding increase in the magnetic anisotropy in the recording layer to maintain thermal stability. Any increase in magnetic anisotropy, however, requires a stronger write field to switch the magnetic grains and write to the disk. Today, the ability of write heads to produce sufficient write field strength is one of the limiting factors in reducing the magnetic grain size to increase aerial density.

One possible solution is PMR with high frequency assisted writing using a spin torque oscillator (STO). This type of recording, also called microwave assisted magnetic recording (MAMR), applies a microwave field from the STO to the magnetic grains of the recording layer. The microwave field may have a frequency close to the resonance frequency of the magnetic grains to facilitate the switching of the magnetization of the grains at lower write fields from the conventional write head than would otherwise be possible without assisted recording.

The STO may be located between the write pole tip and the trailing shield of the PMR write head. The STO is a multilayer film stack that includes a polarization layer and a field generating layer. When an electrical current is applied to the STO, the polarization layer generates a spin-polarized current. The spin polarized current is used to excite magnetic oscillations in the field generating layer and thereby generate a microwave field useful for MAMR applications.

Increasing the damping in the field generating layer reduces the settling time for stabilizing the rotation of the magnetization of the field generating layer when the write pole tip field is reversed in order to place the next magnetic transition on the disk. Thus, the data rate of the write process is improved. However, this approach also has the disadvantage that it can compromise certain properties of the STO such as saturation magnetization and spin polarization. Accordingly, there is a need in the art to achieve a controlled increase of the effective damping of the field generating layer without degrading these properties.

## SUMMARY

Several aspects of the present invention will be described more fully hereinafter with reference to various embodiments of apparatuses and methods related to PMR with a spin torque oscillator for MAMR.

One aspect of an MAMR write head includes a write pole tip, a trailing shield, and a spin torque oscillator between the write pole tip and the trailing shield, the spin torque oscillator having a field generating layer and a damping layer exchanged coupled to the field generating layer.

Another aspect of an MAMR write head includes a write pole tip, a trailing shield, and a spin torque oscillator between the write pole tip and the trailing shield, the spin torque oscillator having a field generating layer and a second layer exchanged coupled to the field generating layer, wherein the second layer is configured to provide magnetic damping greater than the magnetic damping in the field generating layer.

A further aspect of an MAMR write head includes a write pole tip, a trailing shield, and a spin torque oscillator between the write pole tip and the trailing shield, the spin torque oscillator having a field generating layer and a second layer exchanged coupled to the field generating layer, wherein the second layer is configured to increase damping to the field generating layer.

One aspect of a magnetic hard disk drive includes a rotatable magnetic recording disk, and a microwave assisted magnetic recording write head arranged within the hard disk drive to interface with the magnetic recording disk, wherein the MAMR write head comprises a write pole tip, a trailing shield, and a spin torque oscillator between the write pole tip and the trailing shield, the spin torque oscillator having a field generating layer and a damping layer exchanged coupled to the field generating layer.

One aspect of a spin torque oscillator for a microwave assisted magnetic recording write head includes a field generating layer, and a damping layer exchanged coupled to the field generating layer.

It will be understood that other aspects of the present invention will become readily apparent to those skilled in the art from the following disclosure, wherein it is shown and described only several embodiments of the invention by way of illustration. As will be realized by those skilled in the art, the present invention is capable of other and different embodiments and its several details are capable of modification in various other respects, all without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention. Accordingly, the drawings and detailed description are to be regarded as illustrative in nature and not as restrictive.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Various aspects of the present invention will now be presented in the detailed description by way of example, and not by way of limitation, with reference to the accompanying drawings, wherein:

FIG. 1 is a conceptual view of an exemplary embodiment of a PMR hard drive disk.

FIG. 2A is a cross-section view of an exemplary embodiment of a PMR head.

FIG. 2B is a cross-section view of a portion of the PMR head of FIG. 2A with an exemplary embodiment of an STO.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The detailed description is intended to provide a description of various exemplary embodiments of the present inven-

tion and is not intended to represent the only embodiments in which the invention may be practiced. The term “exemplary” used throughout this disclosure means “serving as an example, instance, or illustration,” and should not necessarily be construed as preferred or advantageous over other embodiments. The detailed description includes specific details for the purpose of providing a thorough and complete disclosure that fully conveys the scope of the invention to those skilled in the art. However, the invention may be practiced without these specific details. In some instances, well-known structures and components may be shown in block diagram form, or omitted entirely, in order to avoid obscuring the various concepts presented throughout this disclosure.

Various aspects of the present invention may be described with reference to certain shapes and geometries. Any reference to a component having a particular shape or geometry, however, should not be construed as limited to the precise shape illustrated or described, but shall include deviations that result, for example, from manufacturing techniques and/or tolerances. By way of example, a component, or any part of a component, may be illustrated or described as rectangular, but in practice may have rounded or curved features due to manufacturing techniques and/or tolerances. Accordingly, the components illustrated in the drawings are schematic in nature and their shapes are not intended to illustrate the precise shape of the component, and therefore, not intended to limit the scope of the present invention.

In the following detailed description, various aspects of the present invention will be presented in the context of an STO for PMR hard disk drives. While these inventive aspects may be well suited for this application, those skilled in the art will realize that such aspects may be extended to other applications, such as memory, radio-frequency oscillators, and other suitable spin torque transfer applications. Accordingly, any reference to an STO for PMR hard drive disk is intended only to illustrate the various aspects of the present invention, with the understanding that such aspects may have a wide range of applications.

FIG. 1 is a conceptual view of an exemplary PMR hard drive disk. The PMR hard drive disk **100** is shown with a rotatable magnetic disk **102**. The magnetic disk **102** may be rotated on a spindle **103** by a disk drive motor (not shown) located under the magnetic disk **102**. A PMR head **104** may be used to read and write information by detecting and modifying the magnetic polarization of the recording layer on the disk's surface. The PMR head **104** is generally integrally formed with a carrier or slider (not shown). The function of the slider is to support the PMR head **104** and any electrical connections between the PMR head **104** and the rest of the PMR hard drive disk **100**. The slider is aerodynamically designed to fly above the magnetic disk **102** by virtue of an air bearing created between the surface of the slider and the rotating magnetic disk **102**. This surface of the slider is referred to as an air bearing surface (ABS). The slider is mounted to a positioner arm **106** which may be used to move the PMR head **104** on an arc across the rotating magnetic disk **102**, thereby allowing the PMR head **104** to access the entire surface of the magnetic disk **102**. The arm **106** may be moved using a voice coil actuator **108** or by some other suitable means.

FIG. 2A is a cross-section view of an exemplary PMR head with an STO. The PMR head **104** is formed on a slider (not shown) and includes a PMR read head **202** and a PRM write head **204**. The PMR read head **202** includes a read element **206** positioned between two shields **208** and **210**. The PMR write head **204** includes a main pole **214** coupled to a pair of return poles. The first return pole **216** is coupled to the main

pole **214** by a first yoke **218** and the second return pole **220** is coupled to the main pole **214** by a second yoke **222**. The main pole **214** includes a write pole tip **224** with a surface that faces the surface of the magnetic disk **102**. Two thin film coils **212**, **213** are positioned around the main pole **214**. The magnetic disk **102** is shown with a hard magnetic recording layer **226** and a soft magnetic under-layer **228**, which together provide a flux path between the write pole tip **224** and the return poles **216** and **220**.

In this example, the magnetic disk **102** is moved past the PMR head **104** along a circular track of the magnetic disk **102**. When current is applied to the thin film coils **212**, **213** a perpendicular magnetic field is created between the write pole tip **224** and the soft magnetic under-layer **228**. The magnetic flux is collected by the soft magnetic under-layer **228** and returned to the return poles **216** and **220** to complete the magnetic circuit. The result is a magnetic charge with a perpendicular orientation on the segment of the magnetic recording layer **218** of the disk **102** immediately below the write pole tip **224**.

The PMR write head **204** is also shown with a trailing shield **232** separated from the write pole tip **224**. The trailing shield **232** alters the angle of the write field as well as its gradient, and makes writing more efficient. An STO may be positioned between the write pole tip **224** and the trailing shield **232**. An exemplary embodiment of an STO is illustrated in FIG. 2B. The STO **234** may include a field generating layer **240** and a polarization layer **237** separated by an interlayer **238**. The interlayer **238** may be formed from copper or any other suitable material which provides electrical coupling and magnetic insulation between the field generating layer **240** and the polarization layer **237**. A damping layer **242** may be exchanged coupled to the field generating layer **240**. The STO **234** may have other layers that have been omitted from this description for the purpose of clarity. A spacer **236** may also be located between the polarization layer **237** and the write pole tip **224**, and another spacer **244** may be located between the damping layer **242** and the trailing shield **232**. These spacers **236**, **244** may be formed from ruthenium (Ru), tantalum (Ta), or any other suitable material which provide electrical coupling and magnetic insulation and which depolarizes the current passing between. A current source **246** may be connected across the STO **234** through the write pole tip **224** and the trailing shield **232**. Alternatively, the current source **246** may be connected across the STO **234** by electrodes attached to opposite ends of the STO **234**.

In the exemplary embodiment shown, current is injected into the STO **234** through the write pole tip **224** and the trailing shield **232**. The polarization layer **237** generates a spin-polarized current. The spin polarized current is used to excite magnetic oscillations in the field generating layer **240** and thereby generate a microwave field useful for MAMR applications.

In one exemplary embodiment, the STO **234** may have a cobalt field generating layer **240** exchanged coupled to a doped nickel-iron damping layer **242**. In other exemplary embodiments, the STO **234** could have a field generating layer **240** made from a Heusler alloy to achieve high spin polarization or a cobalt-iron (CoFe) alloy to achieve high saturation magnetization to keep the magnetization in plane despite high applied perpendicular fields (deep gap field) and high microwave fields in the media. The damping layer **242** may be a ferromagnetic metal doped with rare earth element(s) such as gadolinium (Gd), terbium, (Tb), holmium (Ho), and/or any other suitable rare earth elements. Alternatively, the damping layer **242** may be a ferromagnetic metal doped with other damping enhancing elements such as silver

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(Ag), molybdenum (Mo), tungsten (W), platinum (Pt), palladium (Pd), gold (Au), chromium (Cr), or any other suitable material. By way of example, the damping layer 242 may be a nickel-iron alloy doped with gallium (Ga), silver (Ag), molybdenum (Mo), tungsten (W), and/or any other suitable material. Those skilled in the art will readily appreciate that the field generation layer 240 and the damping layer 242 may be manufactured from a selection of any suitable materials and the specific compositions described above for these layers are provided merely as an example and are not intended to limit the scope of the invention. Those skilled in the art will also be well suited to determine the appropriate materials for the field generating layer 240 and the damping layer 242 depending on the particular application and the overall design constraints imposed on the hard disk drive system.

A separate damping layer 242 provides increased damping to the field generating layer 240 of the STO 234 without degrading the saturation magnetization or the spin polarization of the field generating layer 240. At the same time, the damping layer 242 can be used to tune the frequency of the write head so that it matches the frequency requirement of the media. It also improves the stability and coherence of the magnetization of the field generating layer 240 and provides faster settling time for the magnetization when the write field is switched. This facilitates writing to the magnetic disk at high data rates.

The various aspects of this disclosure are provided to enable one of ordinary skill in the art to practice the present invention. Various modifications to exemplary embodiments presented throughout this disclosure will be readily apparent to those skilled in the art, and the concepts disclosed herein may be extended to other devices. Thus, the claims are not intended to be limited to the various aspects of this disclosure, but are to be accorded the full scope consistent with the language of the claims. All structural and functional equivalents to the various components of the exemplary embodiments described throughout this disclosure that are known or later come to be known to those of ordinary skill in the art are expressly incorporated herein by reference and are intended to be encompassed by the claims. Moreover, nothing disclosed herein is intended to be dedicated to the public regardless of whether such disclosure is explicitly recited in the claims. No claim element is to be construed under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 112, sixth paragraph, unless the element is expressly recited using the phrase “means for” or, in the case of a method claim, the element is recited using the phrase “step for.”

What is claimed is:

1. A microwave assisted magnetic recording (MAMR) write head, comprising:

a write pole tip;

a trailing shield;

a spin torque oscillator between the write pole tip and the trailing shield, the spin torque oscillator having a first spacer adjacent to the write pole tip, a polarization layer, a field generating layer, a damping layer exchanged coupled to the field generating layer, and a second spacer located between the damping layer and the trailing shield, wherein the damping layer is configured to tune a frequency of the spin torque oscillator to match a frequency requirement of a recording media; and

a current source connected across the spin torque oscillator, the current source configured to inject a current into the spin torque oscillator;

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wherein the polarization layer is configured to generate a spin-polarized current that excites magnetic oscillations in the field generating layer to generate a microwave field, and

wherein the first spacer and the second spacer are configured to depolarize a current passing through the spin torque oscillator.

2. The MAMR write head of claim 1 wherein the spin torque oscillator further comprises an interlayer between the polarization layer and the field generating layer.

3. The MAMR write head of claim 1 wherein the field generating layer comprises a Heusler alloy.

4. The MAMR write head of claim 1 wherein the field generating layer comprises at least one of cobalt and iron.

5. The MAMR write head of claim 1 wherein the damping layer comprises a ferromagnetic metal doped with a rare earth element.

6. The MAMR write head of claim 5 wherein the rare earth element comprises a material selected from the group consisting of gadolinium (Gd), terbium (Tb), and holmium (Ho).

7. The MAMR write head of claim 1 wherein the damping layer comprises a ferromagnetic metal doped with a material selected from the group consisting of silver (Ag), molybdenum (Mo), tungsten (W), platinum (Pt), palladium (Pd), gold (Au), and chromium (Cr).

8. The MAMR write head of claim 1 wherein the damping layer comprises a nickel-iron alloy doped with a material selected from the group consisting of gallium (Ga), silver (Ag), molybdenum (Mo), and tungsten (W).

9. A microwave assisted magnetic recording (MAMR) write head, comprising:

a write pole tip;

a trailing shield;

a spin torque oscillator between the write pole tip and the trailing shield, the spin torque oscillator having a first spacer adjacent to the write pole tip, a polarization layer, a field generating layer, a second layer exchanged coupled to the field generating layer, and a second spacer located between the second layer and the trailing shield, wherein the second layer is configured to provide magnetic damping greater than the magnetic damping in the field generating layer, and further wherein the second layer is configured to tune a frequency of the spin torque oscillator to match a frequency requirement of a recording media; and

a current source connected across the spin torque oscillator, the current source configured to inject a current into the spin torque oscillator;

wherein the polarization layer is configured to generate a spin-polarized current that excites magnetic oscillations in the field generating layer to generate a microwave fields, and

wherein the first spacer and the second spacer are configured to depolarize a current passing through the spin torque oscillator.

10. The MAMR write head of claim 9 wherein the spin torque oscillator further comprises an interlayer between the polarization layer and the field generating layer.

11. The MAMR write head of claim 9 wherein the field generating layer comprises a Heusler alloy.

12. The MAMR write head of claim 9 wherein the field generating layer comprises at least one of cobalt and iron.

13. The MAMR write head of claim 9 wherein the second layer comprises a ferromagnetic metal doped with a rare earth element.

14. The MAMR write head of claim 13 wherein the rare earth element comprises a material selected from the group consisting of gadolinium (Gd), terbium (Tb), and holmium (Ho).

15. The MAMR write head of claim 9 wherein the second layer comprises a ferromagnetic metal doped with a material selected from the group consisting of silver (Ag), molybdenum (Mo), tungsten (W), platinum (Pt), palladium (Pd), gold (Au), and chromium (Cr).

16. The MAMR write head of claim 9 wherein the second layer comprises a nickel-iron alloy doped with a material selected from the group consisting of gallium (Ga), silver (Ag), molybdenum (Mo), and tungsten (W).

17. A microwave assisted magnetic recording (MAMR) write head, comprising:

a write pole tip;

a trailing shield;

a spin torque oscillator between the write pole tip and the trailing shield, the spin torque oscillator having a first spacer adjacent to the write pole tip, a polarization layer, a field generating layer, a second layer exchanged coupled to the field generating layer, and a second spacer located between the second layer and the trailing shield, wherein the second layer is configured to increase damping to the field generating layer and further wherein the second layer is configured to tune a frequency of the spin torque oscillator to match a frequency requirement of a recording media; and

a current source connected across the spin torque oscillator, the current source configured to inject a current into the spin torque oscillator;

wherein the polarization layer is configured to generate a spin-polarized current that excites magnetic oscillations in the field generating layer to generate a microwave field, and

wherein the first spacer and the second spacer are configured to depolarize a current passing through the spin torque oscillator.

18. The MAMR write head of claim 17 wherein the spin torque oscillator further comprises an interlayer between the polarization layer and the field generating layer.

19. The MAMR write head of claim 17 wherein the field generating layer comprises a Heusler alloy.

20. The MAMR write head of claim 17 wherein the field generating layer comprises at least one of cobalt and iron.

21. The MAMR write head of claim 17 wherein the second layer comprises a ferromagnetic metal doped with a rare earth element.

22. The MAMR write head of claim 21 wherein the rare earth element comprises a material selected from the group consisting of gadolinium (Gd), terbium (Tb), and holmium (Ho).

23. The MAMR write head of claim 17 wherein the second layer comprises a ferromagnetic metal doped with a material selected from the group consisting of silver (Ag), molybdenum (Mo), tungsten (W), platinum (Pt), palladium (Pd), gold (Au), and chromium (Cr).

24. The MAMR write head of claim 17 wherein the second layer comprises a nickel-iron alloy doped with a material selected from the group consisting of gallium (Ga), silver (Ag), molybdenum (Mo), and tungsten (W).

25. A magnetic hard disk drive, comprising:

a rotatable magnetic recording disk and

a microwave assisted magnetic recording (MAMR) write head arranged within the hard disk drive to interface with the magnetic recording disk, wherein the MAMR write head comprises a write pole tip, a trailing shield, a spin torque oscillator between the write pole tip and the trailing shield, the spin torque oscillator having a first spacer adjacent to the write pole tip, a polarization layer, a field generating layer, a damping layer exchanged coupled to the field generating layer, and a second spacer located between the damping layer and the trailing shield, and a current source connected across the spin torque oscillator, the current source configured to inject a current into the spin torque oscillator, wherein the damping layer is configured to tune a frequency of the spin torque oscillator relative to match a frequency requirement of the magnetic recording disk, wherein the polarization layer is configured to generate a spin-polarized current that excites magnetic oscillations in the field generating layer to generate a microwave field, and wherein the first spacer and the second spacer are configured to depolarize a current passing through the spin torque oscillator.

26. A spin torque oscillator for a microwave assisted magnetic recording (MAMR) write head, comprising:

a first spacer adjacent to a write pole tip;

a polarization layer;

a field generating layer, wherein the polarization layer is configured to generate a spin-polarized current that excites magnetic oscillations in the field generating layer to generate a microwave field;

a damping layer exchanged coupled to the field generating layer, wherein the damping layer is configured to tune a frequency of the spin torque oscillator to match a frequency requirement of a recording media; and

a second spacer located between the damping layer and a trailing shield,

wherein the first spacer and the second spacer are configured to depolarize a current passing through the spin torque oscillator.

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